A Plain Answer TO A Popish Priest Questioning the ORDERS OF THE CHURCH of *ENGLAND.*

Drawn up for the satisfaction of his Parishioners, by a Minister of That Church.

IMPRIMATUR,
Libellus cui Titulus [*A Plain Answer to a Popish Priest questioning the Orders of the Church of* England, &c.]

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A

Plain Anſwer

TO A

POPISH PRIEST, &c.

I Know nothing that uſeth to be objected againſt our Orders, but that either,

1. We have not a true Succeſſion of Biſhops. Or
2. No true form of Orders. Or
3. That our Ordainers are Schiſmaticks, or Hereticks, and ſo cannot ordain: for as for that ridiculous ſilly exploded Story of the *Nags-head Ordination*, it requires a very hard Forehead at this time of day to own it, when We have ſo often prov'd from Authentick Records, that *Archbiſhop Parker* was ordain'd in the Chappel at *Lambeth* by more than three Biſhops, and all his Brethren accordingly, agreeable to the *Canons* of the Ancient Church: and if this be deni'd, I will be at any time reſponſible for an *Authentick* Copy of thoſe Records.

Now to the firſt Objection, *That we have no true Succeſſion*; I anſwer,

1. That there is a *double* Succeſſion, of *Doctrine*, and of *Perſons*; as to the Succeſſion of Doctrine, We

have better proofs than They; We believing all that hath been believ'd by the *Catholick Church of Christ* as necessary to Salvation, while the *Romanists* have introduc'd too many both Doctrines and Practises unknown to Antiquity.

2. That as to the Succession of Persons,

1. That proves Nothing without Succession of Doctrines; for many of the *Heretical* Churches, as the *Romanists* account them, of the *East*, can shew as good a Succession as they can at *Rome*.

2. We have had such a Succession from the very foundation of our Church; and if it be objected, that We cannot shew a compleat Catalogue of the Names of our Bishops:

1. We say it is not necessary; For must there have been no Burgesses sent from any Towns in *England* to Parliament, because, as I suppose, no Man can show a List of the Names of all the several Persons that serv'd there for every Town since the first Institution? And were there no Kings in many parts of the World, because we cannot give an account who was the first, and the second, *&c.*

2. Some of the Churches, to whom the *Romanists* allow a Succession, cannot shew compleat Catalogues, as the Churches of *Thessalonica*, *Ephesus*, *Philippi*, *Corinth*, *Smyrna*, &c. and yet no man denies that they have Episcopal Succession amongst them.

3. Nor is the Succession of the *Roman* Church so undoubted as They would make it; for it is questionable whether St. *Peter* were ever Bishop of *Rome* (in the true Ecclesiastical sense of the Word) nor can Their best Authors to this day tell us who were his immediate Successors; and among them, how many of their

Chrono-

Chronologiſts have made two Men, and two Popes of One? (for *Cletus* and *Anacletus* were undoubtedly the ſame Perſon) and if we conſider how many Anti-popes there were in the times of the great Schiſms under which that Church labour'd, and that there are many differences between the *French* and *Italian* Writers about the number of their Popes, and who were the true Succeſſors of St. *Peter*; (The Princes of each Country, during thoſe Schiſms, embracing the Intereſts of that Pope who was of greateſt uſe and advantage to them) we have no great reaſon to depend ſo much on their Succeſſion. And whereas

4. The *Fathers*, to prove Hereticks to be men but of yeſterday, and to have no true Succeſſion from the Apoſtles (as *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Auſtin*, *Optatus*, &c.) inſtance in the Succeſſion of the Church of *Rome*, we are to remember that They were *Weſtern* Fathers, and ſo thought fit, as it was moſt proper, to inſtance in the Succeſſion of the *Weſtern Patriarch*; not but that other Churches could plead the ſame Succeſſion, but that this *Patriarchal* See was the neareſt at hand: and They withall declare, that They could with the ſame Reaſon inſtance in the Succeſſion of other *Patriarchs*, whoſe Seats *Tertullian* calls *Mother-Churches*, as well as *Rome*.

The ſecond Objection is, *That we have no true form of Orders; and that none can confer that Power on Another, which He hath not himſelf.* To which I anſwer in general, That if that Aphoriſm be true, then an Infidel, that baptizeth in caſe of Neceſſity, cannot give Baptiſm, becauſe He himſelf is not baptiz'd; and yet the *Roman* Church allows ſuch Baptiſm to be valid in caſe of Neceſſity.

But

But in particular we ſay,

1. That neither Chriſt nor his Apoſtles inſtituted any form of Words; and if Chriſt did not inſtitute any form of Words, then *Orders* are not a Sacrament from their own Principles; for to every Sacrament is required, as they ſay, an outward Sign, and an inward Grace, and a form of Words to convey that Grace: for I ſhould be glad to meet that Man who would ſhow me, that any one elſe but Chriſt can inſtitute a Sacrament, or that our Saviour delivered the *holy Veſſels*, (the Paten and Chalice) to the Apoſtles, and gave them power to offer Sacrifice for the Quick and Dead.

2. We keep that Form which the Apoſtolical Church us'd in giving *Orders*, viz. Impoſition of Hands, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. 2 *Tim.* 1. 6.

3. Many of the *Romiſh* Church allow this to be a ſufficient Form.

1. In the Caſe of the *Greek* Church, whoſe *Orders* They allow to be valid, tho They uſe not the *Roman* Form. And

2. For this Reaſon *F. Walſh*, *S. Clare*, and ſome others of the *Roman* Church allow our *Orders* to be good.

4. We are ſure that our Form is not only agreeable to the Apoſtolical Writings, but to the Practiſe of the Ancient Church. St. *Chryſoſtom*, Hom. 14. in Act. ſays, *This is Ordination, The hand of Man is impoſed, but God worketh All, and it is his Hand that toucheth the Head of Him that is Ordained.* Nor can the *Romaniſts* themſelves ſhew us any ſuch Form as Theirs is, of touching the Veſſels deputed to the uſe of the Bleſſed Euchariſt, till above 800 *years* after our Saviour's time.

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The third Objection is, *Your Church is Schiſmatical and Heretical, and ſo cannot confer Orders.*

To which we anſwer, That the Charge is unjuſt, and that in truth the Hereſie and Schiſm lies at the door of the Church of *Rome*; and if their Argument be good, let them conſider how They will be able to vindicate themſelves. But take the Charge for granted:

1. The Ordination of Hereticks was lookt upon to be valid in the Primitive Church.

2. The *Greeks* are accounted by the *Romaniſts* not only Schiſmaticks, but Hereticks, as well as We, and yet their Prieſts are not re-ordain'd; nay, many *Greeks* are ſent from the *Seminary* at *Rome* to be ordain'd by thoſe Schiſmatical and Heretical Biſhops in the *Eaſt*.

3. If no Orders given by a Heretick be valid, what becomes of their own, among whom ſo many *Popes* were Heretical, *Liberius* an *Arrian*, *Honorius* a *Monothelite*, *John the 22d* in ſome Points *a Sadduce*, &c?

4. If Orders be, as They reckon, a Sacrament, and the Sacraments give an indelible Character, where is that indelible Character, if He who was once duly order'd a Biſhop, when He turns, as They call it, Heretick, cannot give Orders?

5. Many of their Authors do ſay, That bare laying on of Hands, without uſing any Words at all, is giving of Orders; and ſome, That the Pope's ſaying, *Be Thou a Prieſt*, is ſufficient: as if a Man ſhould ſay, that ſprinkling a Child were baptizing it, when the Miniſter ſaid never a Word; Or that ſaying, Be Thou a Chriſtian, were ſufficient to make it ſuch, without ſprinkling the Child, or dipping it in Water. And

6. At laſt, to make the moſt of it, and to take it for granted that our Biſhops were Schiſmaticks and

 Hereticks,

Hereticks, what is ſaid of Laymens Baptiſm, and ſuch like Caſes, will be pleaded for this, *What ought not to be done, is valid when it is done*, i. e. it ought not to be reiterated.

And when They Object that We had our *Orders* from them, and yet have left them, it is eaſily anſwered,

1. That We had our *Orders* From them, as They from the Apoſtes; and We have ſeparated no farther from Them, than They from the Apoſtles.

2. That this doth not make us any more beholding to Them for handing down our Orders to Us, than They are to the *Jews*, for handing down the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament to Them; All being owing, not to the Charity of the Men, but to the Wiſe Providence and Goodneſs of God, who hath ſo taken care of his Church.

To all which I ſubjoin, That We have a greater aſſurance of the validity of our *Orders*, than They can have of Theirs.

1. Becauſe They make the *Intention* of the Prieſt neceſſary to every Sacrament, and amongſt the Sacraments They reckon *Orders*; (*Council of* Trent, *Seſſ.* 7. *Can.* 11.) and We know, that no Man can be ſure of another Man's Intentions; and have been told, that ſome of their Biſhops have confeſs'd, That whenever they gave Orders, they never intended to make a Prieſt.

2. Becauſe, if the Perſon *Ordained*, or *Ordaining*, be *Simoniacal*; if the Pope, who made the Biſhop, be ſo, or there were no juſt Intention when either of them were baptized, and ſo upward to the firſt Prieſt or Biſhop who gave Baptiſm or Orders, then all that is done by ſuch Men is by their own Doctrine invalid.

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